



WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Management Recommendations for Washington's Priority Species FOR USE TO GUIDE SITE SPECIFIC MANAGEMENT OF PRIORITY SPECIES

Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*)

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's (WDFW) *Management Recommendations for Washington's Priority Species* do not have regulatory authority. Therefore, the following are recommendations only. This abbreviated version of a chapter in *Management Recommendations for Washington's Priority Species: Volume IV* (see http://wdfw.wa.gov/hab/phs/vol4/phs_vol4_birds.pdf) has been streamlined for easier application. Where applicable, these recommendations should be put into practice consistently across a landscape to be most effective. The following recommendations are not site-specific. Where available, a professional in a relevant field (e.g., wildlife biologist) should evaluate the site and surrounding landscape when applying these recommendations.

Attach parcel map with species location indicated if available.

Planning Considerations for Great Blue Herons

- WDFW recommends that land use planning should protect existing great blue heron colonies using colony site-specific management plans that consider the colony size, location, relative isolation and the degree of habituation to human disturbance. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife biologists can assist those that are developing a plan.

General Recommendations

In the absence of a colony site-specific management plan, adhere to the following general guidelines:

- Assure retention of several alternate forest stands at least 10 ac in size with dominant trees at least 56 ft tall within 2.5 mi of nesting colonies (Colonies with > 50 nests will require a greater number of stands). These protected stands will need to be surrounded by a 328 ft buffer where human disturbance is restricted.
- If pesticide use is planned within 2.5 miles of a known heron colony or feeding area, consult Appendix A of the Priority Habitat and Species bird volume (see <http://wdfw.wa.gov/hab/phs/vol4/appndxa.pdf>) for contacts to help assess the use of pesticides, herbicides, and their alternatives.
- See table below for buffers.

Table. Recommended protective buffers from the outer edge of active heron colonies for specified activities.

Activities	Buffer width	Time of Year
All human activity	820 – 985 ft	15 Feb - 31 July ^b
Aircraft flight	2130 ft ^a	15 Feb - 31 July ^b
Logging, construction, blasting or any other intensive land use activity.	3280 ft	15 Feb - 31 July ^b
Any activity that necessitates tree, shrub, or ground cover removal. Use of off-road motorized vehicles.	820 – 985 ft	year-round ^c

^a Vertical buffer distance. ^b Seasonal buffer. ^c Permanent buffer.

January 2005

I have read and understand the above recommendations (s) placed on Parcel #_____ located in the _____
Quarter of _____ Quarter of Section_____, Township_____, Range_____ (East/West meridian) with actual street address
of _____.